



# ARIZONA MILITARY AIRPORTS REGIONAL COMPATIBILITY PROJECT

WESTERN MARICOPA COUNTY/LUKE AIR FORCE BASE

Project Update #3, August 15, 2002

The Western Maricopa County/Luke Air Force Base (AFB) component of the Regional Compatibility Project is an effort to identify permanent resolutions to land use compatibility issues around Luke AFB through collaborative effort and strong implementation. This update is part of a series that will be distributed throughout the project to keep stakeholders and other interested parties up-to-date on the effort's progress.

## **WEST VALLEY & LUKE REGIONAL LAND USE OPEN HOUSE**

The West Valley & Luke Regional Land Use Open House is scheduled for Saturday, September 14 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Wigwam Resort in Litchfield Park, Arizona.

The Open House is organized as a collaborative environment where attendees are encouraged to be active participants. Information will be provided on the project; key issues such as airspace, noise, and safety; and ideas for solutions. Many West Valley communities will be hosting booths to discuss local planning efforts. Representatives from Luke AFB also will be hosting booths to provide information on the base's history and mission, planning issues, and the Goldwater Range. Please note that there will be a special area for children attending the Open House, and complementary refreshments and cookies, sponsored by Sky Harbor Airport and Fighter Country Partnership, will be provided. Please pass on this information to others you think would be interested in attending this event.

## **STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS**

Meetings with project stakeholders to provide project updates and receive input have continued over the past month. Updates have been provided to the legislative Military Airport Preservation Committee and Luke West Valley Council. Members of the project team also met with Maricopa County Supervisor Max Wilson and Brigadier General (Select) Phil Breedlove of Luke AFB. In preparation for the Open House, weekly conference calls have been conducted with representatives from participating communities and Luke AFB. Project team members also met with public information officers from participating communities as part of the organizational effort for the Open House.

## **NELLIS AFB STUDY**

The United States Air Force consistently cites Nellis Air Force Base, just north of Las Vegas, Nevada, as an example of how Air Force training operations are affected by urban encroachment. Nellis AFB makes an excellent case study for analyzing compatibility issues around Luke AFB because, like Luke AFB, it is an important Air Force training base near one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the U.S. and faces similar encroachment challenges. The case study of Nellis AFB illuminates a number of potential methods to ameliorate the impact of encroachment around Luke AFB.

The recent Nellis AFB experience demonstrates that land acquisition by the U.S. government is minimal and is only considered when the mission is inherently threatened. The most recent development proposals near the live ordnance zones of Nellis AFB were addressed through a construction moratorium, land exchanges, and some land acquisition (a total of 649 acres versus 14,000 acres that encompasses Nellis AFB). The jurisdictions in the vicinity of Nellis AFB have more broadly utilized a combination of zoning, planning, and a special Airport Environs Overlay District to minimize the impact from growth. Nearly 28 percent (about 14,000 acres) of the total land within a five-mile radius of Nellis AFB is industrial land. In addition, a mix of federal land, recreational areas, and open space also buffer the base.

## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

Community outreach efforts for the Western Maricopa County/Luke Air Force Base Compatibility Project have ranged from meeting with landowners to planning for the West Valley & Luke Regional Land Use Open House. One-on-one and small group meetings have included briefings to solicit input and receive information from private and public parties, distribution of project information on the Arizona Department of Commerce web site ([www.azcommerce.com](http://www.azcommerce.com)), numerous media interviews, and distribution of the project bulletins/updates to a diverse distribution list. The project team is working with regional media outlets to develop news reports to

encourage public attendance and participation at the Open House and to assist in the development of reports that highlight project efforts.

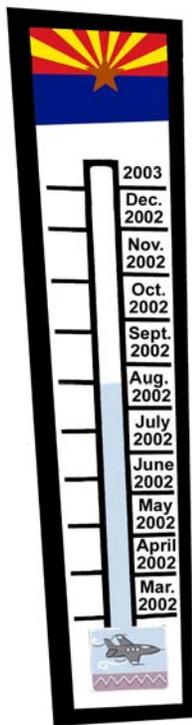
## **INTERACTIVE RETREAT**

A project planning team Interactive Retreat was held on August 12 and 13 at the Wigwam Resort in Litchfield Park. Participants included the project team members from Parsons, the Arizona Department of Commerce, the Arizona Attorney General's Office, the Governor's Office, Economics Research Associates, Katz and Associates, and the Maguire Company. The retreat accomplished the following:

- Review of the data collected, the issues identified, and the opportunities identified to date. The outcome of this review was an action list of data to be collected and issues to be researched for completing the background reports.
- Identification of ideas for implementation.
- Assembly of potential implementation strategy components into sets of unique draft alternatives that will be evaluated during the next month for compliance with law, political acceptability, economic viability and reasonableness.

## **PROJECT PROGRESS**

Over the next month, continued preparation for the Open House and coordination with the West Valley jurisdictions are anticipated. In addition, several key meetings will be convened that are expected to assist in the development of implementation strategies:



**Final Document**  
**Draft Plan Document**  
**Draft Alternatives & Implementation Strategies**  
**West Valley & Luke Regional Land Use Open House**  
**Data Collection & Issue Identification**

- Superintendents from school districts that are located inside “the box” (or the legislatively defined territory in the vicinity of an active military airport) will be convened to discuss issues specific to schools, including safety, noise, and siting.
- Planning and Community Development Directors from across the West Valley will be meeting with base representatives and members of the project team to discuss experiences with the disclosure aspects of S.B. 1525. The group will generate ideas for a process to inform and coordinate with Luke AFB on development applications within “the box” to ensure that safety and noise issues are addressed, while providing consistency and clarity of process for all parties. While some communities have already developed methods for involving the base earlier in the development application process, the purpose of this discussion is to explore the best ways to meet the need for a process that is consistent over time and among jurisdictions. It is anticipated that planning and community development staff will develop proposals through hands-on sessions, and then elected officials and base command would be briefed on a proposed process or other actions.

## **HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS EFFORT**

To find information, provide feedback, or ask questions, please visit the project web site via [www.azcommerce.com](http://www.azcommerce.com), or contact Deb Sydenham, AICP, Director, Community Planning Office, Arizona Department of Commerce at (602)280-8114 or [debs@azcommerce.com](mailto:debs@azcommerce.com).